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THE TRIAL OF THOMAS EMLYN.

THE Pastoral Letter of the Synod of Philadelphia, and other things of the same character, have been surprising to many intelligent persons. Yet these methods of proceeding are mild when compared with those which were adopted in former ages, for similar purposes. People in general are not sufficiently aware of the kindness of God in the progress of tolerant principles, nor of the obligations they are under for the measure of religious liberty enjoyed in our land. The trial of Mr. Emlyn will afford a picture of the state of things in Ireland in 1703: and it is believed that it will be a useful lesson to people of the present age. But that the case may be properly understood, we shall first give a concise account of the man who was tried as a criminal.

Thomas Emlyn was born in England in 1663; and was educated for the ministry among the dissenters. If we may safely form an opinion of his character from his writings, and from what is said of him by his bio-

grapher, he was a man of strong powers of mind, a sincere inquirer after the truth, amiable in his temper, exemplary in his deportment, and an impressive and useful preacher. He began to preach in England. But before he was settled in the ministry, Dr. Sherlock's "Vindication of the Trinity" was published. His tritheistick manner of explaining the subject shocked the mind of Mr. Emlyn; led him first to doubt the truth of the doctrine, and finally to dissent from it. The Countess of Donegal, in Ireland, being in England, became acquainted with Mr. Emlyn, and invited him to be her chaplain. He complied; and the next year he went with her to Ireland. While on a visit at Dublin, he preached one discourse to a congregation of dissenters, which was then under the care of two ministers, Mr. Daniel Williams, and Mr. Joseph Boyse. By this discourse he gained the esteem of the congregation, and prepared the way for a call to the ministry among them. Mr.

Williams left the parish and went to England. Mr. Emlyn also returned to England; but soon after received a pressing request to go to Dublin and supply the place of Mr. Williams. In 1691 he complied with the invitation. Between him and his colleague Mr. Boyse, and between him and the parish, there was great friendship for eleven years. In his preaching he avoided a discussion of the questions relating to the Trinity, and endeavoured to instruct his people in things which they could better understand, and which he believed to be of more useful tendency. But on the other hand, he was careful to keep a conscience void of offence towards God, and to use no language in his preaching which would convey ideas contrary to his own views of truth. His care in these respects was observed by one of his parishioners, who had studied divinity, but afterwards became a physician. The Dr. was a friend to Mr. Emlyn, but became jealous that he was a dissenter from the popular creed. He communicated his suspicions to Mr. Boyse; and with him he visited Mr. Emlyn, and stated to him his apprehensions. Mr. Emlyn had too much integrity to dissemble in such a case. In his narrative of the affair he says, "I now thought myself bound as a Christian to declare my faith openly in so great a point; and freely owned myself convinced, that the God and

Father of Jesus Christ is alone the Supreme Being.—I told them I had no aim to make any strife among them, and offered to leave the congregation peaceably, that they might choose another, if they pleased, to supply my place." But Mr. Boyse stated the matter to a meeting of the Dublin ministers for advice. At their request Mr. Emlyn met them, and freely conversed on the subject. He professed to be ready to give his "assent to the *scriptures*, but not to their *explications* of them." Upon this *first* and *only* conference of about two hours, they proceeded the same day to cast off a brother with whom they had been long in fellowship.

Mr. Emlyn then caused his parish to be called together, stated to them his case, thanked them for their kindness to him, and requested a dismissal. They were filled with surprise and sorrow, and were unwilling to part with him in such an abrupt manner. It was agreed that he should go to England for some weeks, that there might be time for consideration. His affliction was great; he had but recently been called to part with a beloved wife, a son, and a mother, and he had two young children to leave behind him. But notwithstanding all these afflictions, as soon as he had left Dublin, his brethren in the ministry began to display their misguided zeal by raising a public clamour to prepossess the

minds of people against him: and not content with this, they sent letters to London to prevent his being treated with respect in that city.

Mr. Emlyn tarried in England about ten weeks, and then returned to Dublin to take care of his family. But such was the situation in which he found himself, in consequence of the unkind and abusive conduct of the clergy, that he was induced to publish a pamphlet containing his opinions and his arguments. This he entitled a "Humble Inquiry into the scripture account of Jesus Christ." He intended to depart for England in a few days after the work was printed. But a vindictive prosecution was commenced; he was arrested and indicted for *blasphemy*. The passages in the pamphlet on which the charge was founded were copied into the indictment; and the accusers doubtless selected those passages which were deemed the most exceptionable. We shall therefore give a copy of the INDICTMENT:—

"The jury for our sovereign Lady the Queen, upon their oaths say and present, that THOMAS EMLYN, of the city of Dublin, Gent. not having God before his eyes, nor yielding reverence to the true and orthodox holy christian religion, established in the kingdom of Ireland; but being wholly moved by the instigation of the devil, and presumptuously treating of the divinity of our Saviour

and Redeemer Jesus Christ, did on the eighth day of Feb. in the first year of the reign of our sovereign Lady Anne, by the grace of God, of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Queen, defender of the faith, &c. at Merchants-key, in the parish of St. Owen, in the ward of St. Owen, in the county of the city of Dublin aforesaid, by force and arms, namely, by *sword, stick, &c.* write and cause to be printed, a certain infamous and scandalous *libel*, entitled, 'An humble inquiry into the Scripture account of Jesus Christ, or a short argument concerning his Deity and glory according to the Gospels;' in which libel he, the said Thomas Emlyn, did *impiously, blasphemously, falsely and maliciously* assert, affirm, and declare in these English words following, namely:—'I see no reason there will be to oppose those Unitarians who think him [meaning Jesus Christ] to be a sufficient Saviour and Prince, though he be not the only supreme God. Nor can any with reason attempt to prove him to be such from his works and office, as king of his church, since it is implied that as such he must do homage to God the Father, in delivering up his kingdom to him, and the very expression *to God the Father* makes it plain that there is no God the Son in the same sense, or in the same supreme essence with the Father. So then Jesus Christ in his highest capacity being inferiour to the Father, how can

he be the same God to which he is subject, or of the same rank and dignity? So that I may safely say thus much, that the blessed Jesus has declared himself not to be supreme God or equal to the Father as plainly as words could speak, or in brief express.'—And he the said *Thomas Emlyn* did on the day and year aforesaid at Merchants-key aforesaid, in the parish and ward aforesaid, in the county of the city of Dublin aforesaid, publish the said infamous and scandalous libel with intention to disturb the peace and tranquillity of this kingdom, to seduce the pious, true and faithful subjects of our said Lady the Queen, from the true and sacred christian faith and religion, established in this kingdom of Ireland, to the evil and pernicious example of others and against the peace of our said Lady the Queen, who now is, her crown and dignity, &c."

The trial was before the Lord Chief Justice; six or seven bishops attended; two arch bishops took the bench. The Queen's counsel conducted the prosecution with great heat and fury. It behoved them to prove that Mr. Emlyn *wrote the book*, and that the passages quoted were a *blasphemous libel*. They had no witness to testify that the book was written by him, but they maintained that "strong presumption was as good as evidence." When the question occurred, whether the passages in the indictment amounted to *blasphemy*, Mr. Emlyn

wished to be heard in his own defence; but this privilege was denied him. The Judge in an angry tone proceeded to sum up the evidence and to charge the Jury; and that they might be sufficiently *intimidated*, he reminded them that if they acquitted Mr. Emlyn "*the bishops were there*." The Jury retired; but soon the Lord Chief Justice sent to hasten them; they returned with a verdict, *guilty*.

The attorney general then desired that Mr. Emlyn might have the "*honour of a pillory*." His sentence however was, that he should suffer "*a year's imprisonment*—pay a fine of *one thousand pounds*, lie in prison till the fine should be paid, and find security for good behaviour during life." He was told that the *pillory* was the punishment due, but because he was a *man of letters* it was not inflicted. The Judge was also careful to magnify his own mercy by reminding Mr. Emlyn, that in Spain or Portugal the punishment would have been *burning*. Mr. Emlyn was then treated like an infamous malefactor; a paper was placed on his breast, and he was led about the court as an object of derision, and for a warning to others to beware of inquiring into the truth of popular orthodoxy.

The fine was so enormous that it was impossible for Mr. Emlyn to pay it; and he was imprisoned for more than two years. Then the fine was re-

duced to seventy pounds, and paid. But a greedy arch bishop who, as the Queen's Almoner considered himself entitled to one shilling in every pound of the *whole fine*, demanded his fee of this suffering man; nor would he finally accept a less sum than *twenty pounds!*

In his narrative Mr. Emlyn gives the following account of the treatment he received while in prison: "During this more than two whole years' imprisonment, my former acquaintance, were altogether estranged from me."—"Of all men the *dissenting ministers* of Dublin were the most destitute of kindness. Not one of them, excepting Mr. Boyse, vouchsafed me so much as the small office of humanity *in visiting me when in prison*; nor had they so much pity on the soul of their erring brother (as they thought him) as to *seek to turn him from the error of his ways*. These my familiars with whom I had lived so many years in intimate society never once made the attempt, nor discoursed me about it, from the first time that I met and declared my sentiments to them: and yet I had never been backward to enter into sober argument, or to hearken to reasonable evidence."

"Thus I continued long under close confinement without much appearance of relief—contented with this, that I knew *for whom*, and *for what* I suffered. Mr. Boyse made several attempts for my liberty: whose

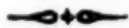
kindness I thankfully acknowledge, in that with great concern and much labour he pursued it from time to time; which has abundantly confirmed my affection and respect to him, and extinguished all uneasy resentments. I am sensible that what he did *against me*, was with *regret and grief*, what he did *for me*, was with *choice and pleasure*. So that I hope that nothing in this history shall be any diminution of his great worth and good temper; who endeavoured to allay the common *odium* against me, as far as he could without the loss of his own reputation."

"But," says Mr. Emlyn, "still there remains another and more righteous judgment, where all both high and low shall stand and await the sentence of the great Judge and Bishop of souls, who will surely reverse all erroneous judgments here; for he will *render tribulation to them who have troubled others*; but *to them who are troubled, rest and peace*: and they who have conscientiously erred, will surely fare better than those who have persecuted them for such error. *For they shall have judgment without mercy who have showed no mercy*. But I heartily and daily pray, this may never be the portion of any who have injured me. And as I hope the good God will forgive me, if I have erred, since he knows it is with sincerity, and that I suffer for what I take to be his truth and glory; so I also hope he

will pardon them who have persecuted me, only from a mistaken zeal; for *they did it ignorantly in unbelief.*"

After Mr. Emlyn was released from prison, he went to London, where he obtained a small congregation, to which he statedly preached. He lived thirty-six years from the time he left the prison in Dublin, and died July 30, 1741, aged 78. The day before his death, he was visited by several of his friends. He rose from his bed and conversed cheerfully with them, and "expressed a great satisfaction in the testimony of a good conscience, that in godly sincerity he had had his conversation in the world;

and that what he had done, was not, and could not be from worldly views, but as he judged for the honour of God and the truth of the gospel. "There is, said he, such a thing as joy in the Holy Ghost. I have known it, and oh, how much is it beyond all the joys of this world!" At the same time he expressed a very grateful sense of the goodness of God in supporting and comforting him under all the trials he had passed thro', and a humble sense of his own defects and unworthiness, saying, "I think it a very proper address for a man to leave the world with — *Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.*"



REFLECTIONS ON THE TRIAL OF THOMAS EMLYN.

THE trial of Mr. Emlyn is too interesting to be dismissed without some useful reflections. Whether his peculiar opinions were correct, is not a question with which I have now any concern. He was a fallible man, liable to err as well as others. Of this he was aware; and this conviction led him to examine the opinions, which he derived from education, and to exercise a candid temper towards his brethren from whom he dissented.—He might change his opinions, and still be in error. This is true of every man.

But admitting that he was in error, to whom was he accountable? Not to erring mor-

tals like himself, but to that God who searcheth the heart, and who knew the motives by which he was governed. Neither the clergy nor the court of Dublin, had any more right to censure and punish him, than the Synod of Philadelphia had to reproach and denounce our Hopkinsian brethren; nor more than the Synod would have to burn these Hopkinsians alive, had they power to do it.

What motive could have influenced Mr. Emlyn to dissent from the majority, but a sense of duty? All worldly motives were in favour of his continuing on the popular side; for it is evident from his care in respect to di-

vulging his opinions, that he had no thought of rendering himself popular by raising a tumult and becoming the demagogue of a party. Although he had dissented from his brethren in opinion, he was disposed to treat them with kindness and respect, to keep a conscience void of offence towards God, and to study the things which tended to the peace of society, and to his own usefulness. He doubtless believed that he could preach as Christ and his apostles did, and say all that the scriptures have said of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost without saying a word about a trinity of persons in one Being. But when directly questioned, he had the honesty and magnanimity to avow his belief, even at the peril of every worldly good. Such was the man whom the clergy could cast off and vilify, and the court treat as an infamous criminal. But let it be remembered, that this was no worse treatment than the Saviour himself endured.

Is it not time for Christians to pause—and to reflect on the manner in which free inquiry has been discountenanced, and the opinions of the majority supported at different periods, and by different sects? For a long series of years this was done by inflicting death in its most horrid forms, on dissenters; at another period the same objects were pursued by imprisonments and various penalties; in our age the denunciations of General Associations and Synods are adopted, togeth-

er with a cry of danger, publick clamour, and unfounded calumny. Is it not a fact, that almost every step which has been taken, in emerging from the midnight darkness of popery, has been accompanied with peril to those who led the way? Has not reproach, denunciation, penalties, imprisonment, or death, been the reward which *Christians* have bestowed on almost every man who has attempted a reformation of what he believed to be popular errors. Let the person be named, if named he *can* be, who has taken a distinguished part, at any period in a christian country, in attempts to expose and correct popular errors, and has not been requited with calumny and abuse. It is unquestionably true, that many such men have erred in well intended efforts; but whether in the right or in the wrong the recompense from contemporaries has been of the same character. They have all had to share in the same kind of treatment which our Saviour and his apostles received from the unbelieving Jews.—Shall then any doctrine be esteemed as unquestionably correct, which has been uniformly guarded by such terrors, or protected by such means? Nothing but error needs such methods of support.

What has been the great source of all this mischief? What has occasioned *Christians* to conduct in such an *antichristian* manner?—Will not the custom of making *human creeds* the criterion

of Christian piety and excellence account for the greater portion of these evils? Let us recur again to the case of Mr. Emlyn, and observe the effect of such a criterion in regard to him.

During the whole period of his ministry at Dublin, he was of the opinion for which he was afterwards rejected, and treated as a *Criminal*. Yet he was beloved and respected by his people, by his colleague, and by other orthodox brethren. Had they applied no other criterion than *the laws of Christ* and *the language of the gospel*, he might probably have spent the following years of his life, in usefulness to his parish, in fellowship with his brethren in the ministry, and in comfort to himself. But as soon as it was known that he dissented from a human creed which the clergy had adopted as a *test* of character, their past views of his piety and excellence seem to have been entirely changed or forgotten; and they were suddenly transformed from friends to enemies. He must now be discarded; a publick clamour must be excited, and he must be pursued by calumny wherever he went. Not only so, he must be indicted, tried, condemned, fined, imprisoned, and treated as a vile blasphemer.

Such are the natural fruits of establishing other *criteria* of Christian piety, than the gospel of the Son of God. The malignant influence of these human tests is truly remarkable. It diverts the minds of men from the

mild forbearing laws of Christ. It breaks the most endearing ties of friendship, and encourages the most unchristian and abusive conduct. It occasions even good men to violate the plainest precepts of the gospel, to overlook the amiable spirit and example of the Redeemer, and to act the part of evil demons, rather than that of humble Christians.

Only reflect for a moment on the barbarous conduct of the clergy in Dublin towards a brother with whom they had long been in fellowship and who was suffering by their influence. Had he been imprisoned for *murder*, would they have treated him with such neglect and inhumanity? Excepting Mr Boyse, not one of the dissenting clergy came near him, to convince him of his supposed error, to comfort him in his affliction, to mitigate his sufferings, or to save his soul from death! Yet according to Mr. Emlyn's own account of these ministers, they were not *bad men*, otherwise than they were *made* so by the malignant influence of a *human creed*, adopted as a *test* of character.

May I not further ask, What is the soul and spirit of popery, but the opinions of men established as a test of moral excellence? Was not the inquisition, with all its apparatus of terror, established on this ground?—In many things the protestants dissented from papists, and by so doing exposed themselves to be treated as *hereticks*. But protestants

brought with them from the regions of popery *some* of its principles and *much* of its spirit. They too could establish human creeds as a criterion of character; and in their turn they could *burn* papists, and *burn* one another.

Among the various classes of Christians, these bewildering criterions of character, established by human pride or human folly, have not only occasioned perpetual contention and the bitterest enmities between different sects, but have probably caused the untimely death, or *ecclesiastical murder*, of more human beings than are now living in the United States!

Requiring assent to such tests has perhaps caused millions to *act the part of hypocrites*; but in no instance has it *proved a man to be a Christian*. A professed assent to these criterions is much oftener the fruit of ignorance and of faith in men, than of knowledge and a real belief of the doctrines proposed.

May it not also be safely affirmed, that these standards of human invention have been among the greatest obstacles to the progress of Christian knowledge? At one period they had occasioned nearly a *total eclipse* of Gospel light. The decisions of popes and councils were substituted for the word of God; and common people were not suffered even to read the Bible. Among the different sects of protestants, which ever may have been the majority, it has been perilous to dissent from its creed; and the

inducements to follow with the multitude, and to forbear inquiry, have been very great. It has required some self-denial to forego the advantages of being on the popular side; and some fortitude to face [the] terrors of death and the inquisition, of prisons and penalties, of reproach and penury, in pursuit of truth. When men are placed in such circumstances, with such allurements on the one hand and such terrors on the other, but few will patiently inquire, and the progress of light and truth must be slow.

The modes of *punishing* men for faithful inquiry have been varied, and the evils inflicted have been gradually diminishing; but too much of the spirit of popery and persecution is still retained. As to *free and impartial* inquiry, it is evident that there can be but little of this, while the motives to acquiesce in popular creeds are so powerful, or while he, who inquires, must do it at the risk of his reputation, his usefulness and his comfort.

Some of the *evils* of human creeds, as criterions of moral character, have now been enumerated. Their sum is enormous. What then are the *benefits* which have been derived from these tests, to counterbalance such a *mass of sin and misery*? May they not all be represented by *cyphers*?

If the man who first invented a human creed as a test of character, had foreseen all the mis-

chiefs of his invention, would it not have required a heart more hardened than Pharaoh's to publish it to the world? Shall then enlightened Christians of the present age, any longer support a practice which has not even the shadow of authority from the Bible, and which has produced no real benefit; but which has for ages evidently embarrass-

ed free inquiry, obstructed the progress of light, occasioned much hypocrisy and dissimulation, unceasing animosity, slander and reviling,—and which has subjected millions of different sects to severe sufferings, and millions more to untimely death, by the murderous hands of deluded fanatics?

ON DEVOTION AT MEALS.

Mr. Editor,

AMONG the pious customs, which are falling into disuse, it is to be feared that we must rank the practice, once so prevalent, of asking a blessing and returning thanks at common meals. Time was, when they, who neglected it, in a christian land, were considered, as more inexcusable than the unenlightened heathen.

But, if we admit, that too great stress was laid upon it by our scrupulous fathers, must not every friend of vital piety regret, that it is now so greatly disregarded? May we not reside in many families professedly christian, without perceiving the smallest evidence of this, or any other kind of domestick devotion,

That it is a reasonable service, no friend of piety, I think, will question. Examples of it were given by our blessed Saviour; and it is virtually enjoined by these scriptural direc-

tions, which require us to “pray without ceasing; in every thing to give thanks; and, whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God.” Indeed the omission of it may be generally ascribed to some less conscientious principle, than the want of authority for the practice.

None, but the unprincipled, will hesitate to admit, that our food is the product of divine munificence. It is equally undeniable, that a devout reception and grateful acknowledgment of the bounties of God's providence are pleasing to him, who “giveth us richly all things to enjoy.” Nor is it the least recommendation of the observance, for which I am pleading, that it has been so generally practised by the devout of every age.

It cannot but be lamented, that the careless and inconsistent manner, in which this service has been often performed,

should make it appear to so many a matter of indifference, and to others an object of contempt. Of these abuses the celebrated William Law justly and emphatically complains in his "Serious call to a devout and holy life."

"We see yet," says he, "some remains of this custom in most christian families; some such little formalities, as show you, that people used to call upon God at the beginning and end of their meals. In one house you may see the head of the family just pulling off his hat; in another, half getting up from his seat; another shall, it may be, proceed so far, as to make, as if he said something; but however these little attempts are the remains of some devotion, that was formerly used at such times, and are proofs, that religion has formerly belonged to this part of common life."

The disuse of this pious custom is thus reprov'd by a preacher in our Capital, when describing a modish female, on a late publick occasion, he remarks "twice or thrice in a year, thanks are given to God at her table, that is, when a minister of religion is one of her guests."

It is worthy of observation, that in a colony, not long since discovered on one of the scattered islands in the South Seas, composed principally of the offspring of English and Otaheitean parents, the practice of asking a blessing on their food is scrupulously followed. The Bishop

of Cloyne, at the last annual meeting of "the British and Foreign Bible Society," thus notices the circumstance, "their first employment, at sunrise, is to bless their Creator for giving them another day; and, at their meals, they continue the pious custom, once universally followed here, *but now, I fear, growing too much into disuse*, of thanking God for furnishing them with food, and for giving them health to enjoy it." How loudly does their example reprove great numbers in christian lands, who enjoy such superiour advantages for the cultivation of piety!

It is devoutly to be wished, that all, especially parents and heads of families, would more seriously consider the reasonableness of the service defended in this article, and the great danger of wholly neglecting this and the other instituted means and expressions of piety. Among the benefits resulting from this practice, I shall content myself with those, suggested by the author first quoted. "If every head of a family was, at the return of every meal, to oblige himself to make a solemn adoration of God, in such a decent manner, as becomes a devout mind, it would be very likely to teach him, that swearing, sensuality, gluttony, and loose discourse are very improper at these meals, which are to begin and end with devotion."

ONESIMUS.

INEQUALITIES OF CONDITION.

WHEN we look at the diversity of condition with which the world abounds, we naturally conclude, that, under the government of a good being, such a state of things can be intended for nothing but a state of probation. Different circumstances, we observe, are necessary to cherish and mature different virtues; and, notwithstanding all the complaints which we daily hear of the partiality of the gifts of nature and of fortune, or in more pious language, of the distributions of Providence, certain it is, that some of the noblest virtues of Heathenism, and the loveliest graces of Christianity, would have no place in a system where all were equal, and all happy. If every condition in life were comfortable, there would be no call for contentment in one, or exercise of compassion in another. If all the ranks in society were equal, there would be no need of humility, and no place for condescension. If all the inequalities now produced by various degrees of wealth were levelled, there would be fewer opportunities for beneficence, and fewer reasons for gratitude. In short, the exercise of all the social virtues supposes a prodigious variety in the relative situations of mankind. The graces of charity, gentleness, compassion, liberality, gratitude, forgiveness and civility, are grounded upon the relations of richer

and poorer, higher and lower, wiser and weaker, stronger and feebler, older and younger. The duties of parental care, filial piety, fidelity, and patriotism, result from the relations of parent and child, master and servant, magistrate and subject. Do you ask what is the object of these remarks? It is to reconcile you to the enormous differences which are produced in society by the unequal distribution of wealth. It is to remind you, that nothing on earth is given to man simply as a blessing or as a reward; every external good is put into our hands as an experiment. It is to lead you to reflect, that if this world is a state of probation, it is of little importance by what we are tried.---One is born to an immense estate. He is born then to severe trials, and the intention of them is to form his character to active virtue. Mighty means are placed in his hands, and heaven is looking steadily on, with watchful eye, to see whether he lies down in sloth, locks himself up in avarice, bursts out in extravagance, riots in haughtiness; or whether he is busy in schemes of benevolence, scatters with noble and distinguishing profusion, and shows a bounty as persevering as his resources are inexhaustible.—Another opens his eyes upon the world in all the dreariness of poverty. He stretches out his hand, and

finds that he can touch nothing which he may call his own. The passive virtues are here invited to adorn the character, over which nature has spread no glitter to dazzle the world's eye. Yet the notice of heaven follows him through life, to see whether he sinks into despair, grows sullen with misanthropy, is betrayed into meanness; or whether he bears up against calamity; is frugal, industrious, faithful, honest, and uncomplaining; and displays in the darkness of external circumstances the mild light of contentment and hope.—Certain it is, that there is no situation in life which is not peculiarly adapted to the cultivation of certain virtues, as there is no region in the earth which bears not

its peculiar growth. In the utmost distresses of want, we discover and admire instances of fortitude which no misfortunes can shake; as in the cold and cheerless barrens of our country, we see the pine tree flourishing in lofty grandeur, unbent by the blasts of the northern winter. In the more rich and abundant stations of society, where every thing invites to luxury as well as persuades to munificence, we sometimes see examples of fostering benevolence and far extended bounty; as in the luxuriant pastures of the south, we find the plane-tree stretching his wide umbrageous limbs to form a grateful shade from the scorching sun, or a desirable shelter from the drenching rain. B.



A STRIKING EXAMPLE OF THE POWER OF CUSTOM.

IN judging of right and wrong there is perhaps nothing by which the minds of men are so frequently misled as by the power of custom. Few persons are aware how much the opinions and conduct of men in general are governed by this influence; and probably no man is free from it, or aware how far his own opinions and conduct are thus governed.

This subject was suggested by reading the Letters of the late Rev. and pious John Newton, in which he gives an account of the remarkable occurrences in his own life. When young he

adopted the most dangerous opinions, and was eminently vicious. While of this character he became in some measure acquainted with seafaring business, and with that of the slave trade. At length he was suddenly stopped in his career of vice, made to reflect on his past impiety, to renounce his licentious principles, and to turn his thoughts to the concerns of his soul and religion. After he became, as he believed, and as was probably the fact, a true penitent, he readily engaged in the slave trade, first as a mate, and then as a master of a vessel. This horrible

traffick he pursued for several years, buying cargoes of *human beings*, in Africa, transporting them to the West-Indies, and selling them for slaves. Yet in writing his life he could say ;—

“During the time I was engaged in the slave trade, I never had the least scruple as to its lawfulness. I was upon the whole satisfied with it, as the appointment Providence had marked out for me ; yet it was in many respects far from being eligible. It is indeed *accounted a genteel employment*, and is usually very profitable, though to me it did not prove so, the Lord seeing that a large increase of wealth would not be good for me. However, I considered myself as a sort of gaoler or turnkey ; and I was sometimes shocked with an employment that was perpetually conversant with *chains, bolts and shackles*. In this view, I had often petitioned in my prayers, that the Lord in his own time would be pleased to fix me in a more humane employment ; and, if it might be, place me where I might have more frequent converse with his people and ordinances, and be freed from those long separations from home, which were often hard to bear.” Vol. 1, p. 95.

The letter of which this extract is a part, bears date Feb. 1, 1763, which was many years prior to the time that the enormities of the slave trade became the subject of general attention

in England. The pious character of Mr. Newton precludes all doubt of his sincerity in stating what had been his views of this commerce, while he followed the employment. Nor does it appear from his manner of speaking on the subject, that his eyes were more than half opened respecting the injustice of the trade when the letter was written. Excepting among the Quakers, but little had been done or said, to expose the inhumanity of the traffick. But in the very year in which Mr. Newton wrote this letter, the Quakers in England, at their yearly meeting, advanced a step farther than they had ever done before, in their testimony against this species of trade. Thus they addressed the members of their society :—

“We renew our exhortation that Friends every where be especially careful to keep their hands clear of giving encouragement in any shape to the slave trade ; it being evidently destructive of the natural rights of mankind, who were all ransomed by one Saviour, and visited by one divine light in order to salvation ;—a traffick calculated to enrich and aggrandize some upon the misery of others, in its nature abhorrent to every just and tender sentiment, and contrary to the whole tenor of the gospel.” Hist. of the Abol. vol. 1, p. 96.

But at that period the Friends were not regarded in England as the most enlightened people ; nor

were their opinions on such subjects so much respected then, as they are at the present time. Since Mr. Newton wrote his letter, a remarkable change has occurred in publick sentiment in respect to the slave trade, both in Great Britain and this country. At the present day, people in general in New-England, who have the least claim to goodness, religion or humanity, regard the traffick in slaves with horror. So manifestly unjust and cruel, so glaringly inhuman and wicked does it now appear, that to many it will be difficult for them to admit the *possibility* that *good men* were ever concerned in such a dreadful commerce. Yet it is probable that many other good men besides Mr. Newton have been concerned in this trade, and with as little thought of its unjust and inhuman character.

But how was it possible for a good man to follow this barbarous traffick without "the least scruple as to its lawfulness?" How could Mr. Newton daily read the gospel, and be "conversant with" the displays of divine mercy, with the amiable spirit of the Redeemer, and his benignant precepts; and still be "perpetually conversant with *chains and bolts and shackles*," for oppressing, confining and enslaving his sable brethren? How could he every day look to Heaven for mercy, and ask the kind Father of all to prosper him in his pursuits, while his very business was an *unmerci-*

ful trade in human beings? How could he read the command "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even the same unto them," and still make use of his "chains, bolts and shackles?" How could he pray that God would place him in some situation by which he would not be exposed "to so long separations from home," while he was employed in forcing the poor Africans by hundreds, to leave their native country, their relations, and all on earth, which was dear to them? in transporting these victims of avarice to regions from which they were *never to return?*—in selling them as he would cattle in a publick market, and to masters as merciless as infernal spirits?

These questions involve difficulties which are not easily obviated, and inconsistencies which no man can reconcile. To admit that Mr. Newton was really a good man, while there was daily such incongruity in his conduct, requires an extent of candour and charity which many may be disposed to censure; and perhaps none more readily than those, who need similar candour on account of similar inconsistencies, of which they are not aware.

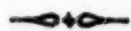
The ground on which I feel authorized to extend such candour, is this: good men are imperfect; they know not every thing; they have not examined every subject, and they are in a great measure under the domi-

nion of generally approved opinions and customs. When they act conscientiously, they act according to the light they have, be it greater or less. When Mr. Newton pursued the slave trade, it was generally regarded as a lawful, lucrative and "genteel employment;" and the eyes of people were so fast closed by the influence of custom, that the question of its consistency with the spirit of the gospel seldom occurred. Or if it occurred, it was answered with the same careless ease and unconcern, that many Christians of the present day answer similar questions in relation to war. Mr. Newton had not, it may be presumed, examined the subject when he engaged in the business, but proceeded on the ground of its being an approved employment, and one which was authorized by the government under which he lived.

If any should be disposed to condemn the principle adopted in this article, as too *liberal* and *latitudinarian*, let him ask himself this question—does it require greater liberality of sentiment to admit that Mr. Newton was a good man, while "conversant with chains, bolts and shackles," for enslaving the Africans, than is requisite to believe, that some good men have been as

"conversant with" swords, guns and bayonets, for the *slaughter* of fellow beings? I see no greater difficulty in the former case than in the latter, excepting what results from these circumstances—the slave trade has ceased to be popular, war has not.

But if it be admitted that there have been good men so misled by custom as to follow the unchristian traffick in slaves, without any "scruple as to its lawfulness," this should teach us candour and caution, in judging of the characters of men whose education has been widely different from our own. It should also excite suspicions that we may yet be blinded by custom in other particulars; it should lead us to the most careful examination of every opinion and custom which we have adopted by education, and especially of those by which the rights of one class of men are violated by another. Notwithstanding all that has been said of this "enlightened age," men are still liable to be influenced by custom; and probably many things which are now generally approved, will be abhorred by future generations, and classed with the slave trade. They may be as much amazed at our inconsistencies, as we are at the conduct of Mr. Newton.



USEFUL HINTS FROM "REMARKS ON THE LIFE OF HOWARD."

"The example of Howard is among others, on this; that he remarkable on many accounts; attached himself to a single class

of abuses. Other reformers have in general, taken a wider range; and have endeavoured to include in their schemes of inquiry and exposure, all the abuses, or as many as possible of all the abuses of the state. Perhaps this may be, in part at least, the reason that Howard made so great progress and produced so deep a conviction; and that so many other explorers have accomplished so little.

"Were the practice of singling out separate classes of abuses to become common among public spirited men, each man attaching himself to one class, and endeavouring, as Howard endeavoured, to get access to all the important facts, and lay them with their evidence before the publick; all the departments of abuse would quickly be known; mischief could no where operate in the dark; every man would become expert in his own department; the general treasure of knowledge would be laid open to the publick; and improvement would become unavoidable, by the glaring evidence of its necessity and usefulness. Labour would thus be divided, and its productive powers be multiplied; multiplied in that line of exertion in which it is preeminently productive of the most extensive benefits to mankind.

"What advantages, for example, would that man confer on his country, who would but point out the abuses which prevail in the practice of EDUCA-

TION; through all the classes of the people, from those who are abandoned to the tuition of their own senses and experience, like the beasts; to those who are trained to virtue or vice, to intellectual strength or imbecility, in the highest and most vaunted of our seminaries!" *Philan.*

The plan proposed in this article for dividing labours, and for each inquirer "to attach himself to one class of abuses," may be of great utility. One man cannot do every thing, nor excel in many things. In the mechanick occupations, to excel, it is generally necessary that a man should limit his attention and confine his labour to one trade. He who attempts to excel in many trades, will probably not rank high in any one. There may be exceptions, but they are rare.

"The abuses which prevail in the practice of EDUCATION," would afford an ample field for many individuals of the best talents. The importance of education is rising in the view of Christians, perhaps, of every denomination; and it may be hoped that men of leisure, talents, and benevolence will exert themselves to investigate, display and correct the prevailing abuses, whether in colleges, academies, common schools, or in families. Perhaps in no way could time and talents be better employed. Well written articles on this subject will be thankfully received for the Christian Disciple. Let

it be considered whether it be not one of the greatest defects in education, that much more pains is taken to cultivate the understanding than to amend the heart. Are not instructors much more careful to make their pupils intelligent, than to lead them into the path of religion and virtue? Knowledge may justly be regarded as a means of virtue; but it must be *directed* to that end by education, or it will probably prove the means of vice. Many men who have been eminently learned have been as eminently vicious; and they were probably made so by a vicious or defective education. It is not enough that children should be instructed in reading and writing, in the arts and sciences; they need to be taught how to apply their knowledge to virtuous purposes.

Not only should they be taught to *know* the will of God, but to *do* it.

It will probably be asked, who but God can *make children virtuous*? Another question may be asked, who but God can *make children intelligent or learned*? The answer to both questions may be the same, *none but God*. Yet God works by men and means; and a well conducted education will do as much towards making children virtuous, as it will towards making them intelligent and learned.

I am happy, in being able to produce the testimony of the late President Dwight, in support of the opinion here advanced. In an address to parents, in the sixth part of his Poem entitled *Greenfield Hill*, he has the following lines:

"Virtues, like plants of nobler kind,
Transferr'd from regions more refin'd
The gardener's careful hand must sow;
His culturing hand must bid them grow;
Rains gently shower; skies softly shine,
And blessings fall from realms divine.
Much time, and pain, and toil, and care,
Must virtue's habits plant and rear:
Habits alone through life endure,
Habits alone your child secure;
To these be all your labours given;
To these your fervent prayer to HEAVEN,
Nor faint, a thousand trials o'er,
To see your pains effect no more.
Love, duty, interest, bid you strive;
Contend, and yield not while you live:
And know, for all your labours past,
Your eyes shall see a crop at last."

On the same subject the Doctor has the two following notes:
"No principle of action will

usually be of any service to children unless it be made *habitual*." "I believe that there

are very few children who might not be rendered amiable and worthy, if their parents would begin their efforts in season, and continue them steadily, without yielding to either sloth or discouragement."

There is, however, one great

difficulty to encounter in attempting to introduce a general system of *virtuous education*: for many parents have themselves been nearly ruined by a vicious education, and they are prepared of course to ruin their children.



THE CHARACTER OF RICHARD REYNOLDS.

THE memory of the just man is blessed, to whatever denomination he may have belonged. Richard Reynolds of Bristol, was a member of the Society of Friends; he died at Chettenham in England, September 10, 1816. The following account is extracted from the Christian Observer; and it is pleasing to see in that work, such a tribute of respect to the character of a man who dissented from the opinions of the Editor.

"His Christian benevolence was not confined to the numerous charitable institutions of his own city, but was co-extensive with the habitable globe. Following the example of his great Master, wherever there was a suffering fellow creature of whatever colour, or creed, within his reach, his open purse, his expanded heart, his liberal hand, promptly, actively, perseveringly, afforded efficient relief. His influential example gave a tone to the philanthropick exertions of his fellow citizens, who will long retain a deep impression of

his extraordinary worth and transcendant virtue.

"Indeed, the spontaneous testimonies of respect to his memory, which all ranks of them evinced on the occasion of his funeral which took place on the 18th of Sept. were very remarkable. On that day, soon after eight o'clock in the morning, about *five hundred boys* from the benevolent schools of St. James and St. Paul, and the Royal Lancasterian School, were formed in two open columns, extending from each side of the good man's late dwelling across St. James' square. Their youthful appearance was well contrasted with the sorrowful countenances of numbers of the surrounding poor, who filled the area of the square, and lined the streets, eager to pay their last tribute of respect to their common benefactor. Most of the shops in the streets through which the procession passed were shut. About seventy relations of the deceased followed the body in mournful procession, and were joined by many, both

men and women, of the society of Friends, and also by above three hundred of the most respectable of his fellow citizens of other religious denominations in mourning; and among them Aldermen Daniel, Tripp, and Birch, Mr. Sheriff Barrow, and other members of the corporation; J. Butterworth, Esq. M. P. together with several of the resident clergymen and dissenting ministers of different persuasions; the gentlemen of the committees of the Bible Society, the Infirmary, the Dispensary, the Samaritan, the Prudent Man's Friend, and British and Foreign School Societies; the Orphan Asylum, the Blind Asylum, the Benevolent Schools of St. James and St. Paul, the Penitentiary, the Stranger's Friend, the Friend in Need, and several other charities; of which Mr. Reynolds had been a liberal benefactor, and of many of them, till within a few months of his decease, an active member. To the credit of the attending thousands, the strictest decorum was maintained. Amidst the tolling of several of our church bells, the procession reached the graveyard of the Quaker's Meeting house in Rosemary-street, where, after placing the remains of the deceased over the grave, a solemn stillness—a silence that might be felt—ensued. Several Quakers, both men and women, in orderly succession, addressed the spectators, reminding the survivors of the vanity of all things below; warning

them not to put their trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God;—after the example of their deceased friend, to evidence their faith by their works, disclaiming all merit in them; and to consider themselves but as stewards who must soon render an account of their stewardship, and be accepted by the Father through the alone merits of the Son, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. These devotional services were closed with a very fervent and appropriate prayer.

The following anecdotes of this extraordinary man are given on the most satisfactory authority:—

During the scarcity of 1795, after relieving the wants of his immediate neighbourhood, he sent, in a cover to the London Committee, with only these words—“*To relieve the wants of the poor of the metropolis,*” and without any signature, the sum of TWENTY THOUSAND POUNDS!

Applying to a gentleman whom he thought rich, but who was really only in circumstances of mediocrity, to stimulate him to give liberally, he made use of this argument: “When gold encircles the heart, it *contracts* it to that degree that *no good* can issue from it; but when the pure gold of faith and love gets *into* the heart, it *expands* it so that the last drop of life blood will flow into any channel of benevolence.”

A lady applied to him on be-

half of an orphan. After he had given liberally, she said, "when he is old enough, I will teach him to name and thank his benefactor." "Stop," said the good man; "you mistake: we do not thank the clouds for the rain: teach him to look higher, and thank him who giveth both the clouds and the rain."

His maxim was; "I am only a *steward*, and must soon render up my accounts; therefore I will make my own hands my executors:" yet he laid out TEN THOUSAND POUNDS in estates; the rents to be divided, *for ever*, between seven of the publick charities of Bristol, to supply the wants of the poor.

Being importuned by a friend to sit for his portrait, he at length consented. "How would you like to be painted?" "Sitting among books."—"Any book in particular?"—"The Bible."—"Open at any part?"—"At the fifth chapter of Romans; the first verse to be legible, 'therefore being justified by *faith*, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.'"—Blessed testimony of *such a man* who wore no phylacteries, blew no trumpet, nor made long prayers in the corner of the streets, to be seen by men. Our Father who saw in secret, has ere now rewarded him openly. He spent the last ten years of his life in *active benevolence*, seeking out cases of distress, occupying nearly the *whole of his time* in such pursuits, besides employing

as his almoners many other benevolent characters.

"On the second instant, a general meeting of the inhabitants of Bristol was held for the purpose of forming a charitable institution, to perpetuate the memory of the late Mr. Reynolds. Such an institution was accordingly formed, under the name of *Reynolds' Commemoration Society*, the object of which is to grant relief to persons in necessitous circumstances, and also occasional assistance to other charitable institutions. The meeting was attended by the members for the city, most of the members of the corporation, many of the clergy, and numbers of the most respectable bankers and merchants."

This venerable saint died, "aged 81" and, says the Christian Observer, "full of faith, of days, of riches and of honour, as a shock of corn fully ripe."

Now, be it observed and remembered, that Richard Reynolds was a member of that society to which the term *Quakers* was contemptuously given; a society which has suffered more persecution and reproach than that of any other denomination of protestants, either in Great Britain or in this country. Whether Episcopalians or Presbyterians were the majority in England, the Quakers were doomed to suffer as *hereticks*; thousands of them were imprisoned, and many of them were persecuted even unto death. Perhaps it is

not a century since nine tenths of Christians, of all other denominations were so blinded by prejudice and calumny, as to believe it to be impossible that a *Quaker* should be a good man. But now, in a popular periodical work, ably conducted by Episcopalians, what an admirable eulogy of a *Quaker* have we seen!—Is not the time approaching when Christians in general will be so wise as to understand this—that, to do justly, to love mercy, to walk hum-

bly and peaceably, are the true characteristics of the good man; that these *essential* characteristics are not confined to the party which may happen to be the majority in any country,—that they are more commonly found among the *persecuted* than among *persecutors*—among the *calumniated* than among *calumniators*, and that such has ever been the case since the time that Jesus and his apostles were despised and rejected by the majority in Jerusalem?

THE MEMORIAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS PEACE SOCIETY.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled:—

The Memorial of the Members of the Peace Society of Massachusetts respectfully represents:—

THAT the society which now solicits the attention of our national rulers, was instituted for the single purpose of diffusing pacifick and benevolent sentiments through this country, and through the world. Impressed with a deep and sorrowful conviction, that the spirit of Christianity, which is a spirit of mercy, peace and kind affection, is imperfectly understood; afflicted by the accumulated miseries and extensive desolations which war has lately spread over the fairest, most fruitful, and most enlightened regions of the earth; and at the same time encouraged by many decisive proofs of the

revival of purer, and more benevolent principles among Christian nations, your memorialists have formed this association with the solemn and deliberate purpose of cooperating with the philanthropists of every country, in promoting the cause of peace and charity; in stripping war of its false glory, and in uniting different communities in the bonds of amity and mutual good will. We are sensible, that from the nature of our object, it is chiefly to be accomplished by a silent and gradual influence on the minds of men, and accordingly we have limited our operations to the circulation of useful

treatises, in which the pacifick spirit of our religion has been exhibited with clearness, and we hope with success. We believe, however, that the present moment demands a departure from our usual course, and we cherish the hope, that by an application to the government under which we live, important service may be rendered to the cause of humanity, in which we are engaged.

The present memorial is founded on two occurrences, which we hail as auspicious to the pacification of the world. The first occurrence, to which we refer, is the well known and unprecedented union of several of the most illustrious powers of Europe, in declaring, before "the Universe, their unwavering determination to adopt, for the only rule of their conduct, both in the administration of their respective States, and in their political relation with every other government, the precepts of Christianity, the precepts of justice, of charity, and of peace."

The second occurrence to which we refer, is the decided expression of pacifick sentiments and anticipations in the conclusion of the late message of the President of the United States, in which his parting wishes for his country are expressed with tenderness and power. In this remarkable passage, worthy the chief magistrate of a Christian community, he expresses his conviction, that "the destined career of his country will exhibit

a government which, whilst it refines its domestick code from every ingredient not congenial with the precepts of an enlightened age, and the sentiments of a virtuous people, seeks by appeals to reason, and by its liberal examples, to infuse into the law which governs the civilized world, a spirit which may diminish the frequency, or circumscribe the calamities of war, and meliorate the social and beneficent relations of peace; a government, in a word, whose conduct, within and without, may bespeak the most noble of all ambitions, that of promoting peace on earth, and good will to man."

On the occurrences now stated, your memorialists respectfully beg leave to found the following suggestions and solicitations:—

First,—We respectfully solicit, if it be consistent with the principles of the constitution, that the solemn profession of pacifick principles, lately made by several distinguished sovereigns of Europe, may be met by corresponding professions on the part of our own government.—Whilst we are sensible that a melancholy discordance has often existed between the language and the conduct of rulers, we still believe, that the solemn assertion of great and important principles, by men of distinguished rank and influence, has a beneficial operation on society, by giving to these principles an increased authority over the consciences of those by whom they

are professed; by reviving and diffusing a reverence for them in the community, and by thus exalting the standard of *publick opinion*, that invisible sovereign, to whose power the most absolute prince is often compelled to bow, and to which the measures of a free government are entirely subjected. When we consider the support which is now derived to war, from the perversion of publick sentiment, we are desirous that our government should unite with the governments of Europe in a distinct and religious acknowledgment of those principles of peace and charity, on which the prosperity of States, and the happiness of families and individuals, are alike suspended.

Secondly,—We respectfully solicit, that Congress will institute a deliberate inquiry, for the purpose of ascertaining the methods by which this government may exert, on human affairs, that happy influence which is anticipated by the President of the United States; the methods by which it “may infuse into the law which governs the civilized world, a pacifick spirit, may diminish the frequency, or circumscribe the calamities of war, and may express the most noble of all ambitions, that of promoting peace on earth, and good will to man.” We are persuaded that a government, sincerely disposed to sustain the august and sublime character which is here described, of the pacificator of the world, will not want means of promoting its end. We trust, that

under the persevering and well directed efforts of such a government, milder principles would be introduced into the conduct of national hostilities; that the reference of national controversies to an impartial umpire, would gradually be established as the law of the Christian world; and that national compacts would be formed for the express purpose of reducing the enormous and ruinous extent of military establishments, and of abolishing that outward splendour which has so long been thrown around war, and which has contributed so largely to corrupt the moral sentiments of mankind.

When we represent to ourselves a Christian government sustaining the beneficent relation to the world; mediating between contending States; recommending peaceful methods of deciding the jarring claims of nations; labouring to strip war of its pernicious glare, and to diminish the number of those who are interested in its support; diffusing new and generous sentiments in regard to the mutual duties and obligations of different communities; and inculcating, by its own example, a frank and benevolent policy, and a sincere regard to the interests of the world; when we represent to ourselves such a government, we want language to express our conceptions of the happy and magnificent results of its operations. It would form a new and illustrious era in human affairs, whilst by the blessings which it would spread, and by

the honour and confidence which it would enjoy, it would obtain a moral empire, more enviable than the widest dominion ever founded on violence and crime.

Loving our country with tenderness and zeal; accustomed to regard her as destined to an exalted rank, and to great purposes; and desirous to behold, in her institutions and policy, increasing claims to our reverence and affection, we are solicitous that she should enter first on the career of glory which has now been described, and that all her connexion with foreign States should be employed to diffuse the spirit of philanthropy, and to diminish the occasions and miseries of war. Of such a country, we shall exult to be the children, and we pledge to it an attachment, veneration and support which can only be accorded to a virtuous community.

It is our happiness that we live in an age when many noble schemes of benevolence have been accomplished; when the idea of a great amelioration of human affairs is no longer rejected as a dream of fancy; when statesmen are beginning to learn, that all nations have a common interest; when philanthropy is extending its views to distant countries, and is executing purposes which would once have been regarded as the offspring of a blind and extravagant zeal. In this age of enlarged views, of generous excitement, of unparalleled activity for the good of mankind, it is hoped that the idea of a nation, es-

pousing the cause of peace and humanity, will not be dismissed as visionary and impracticable. Enlightened and benevolent statesmen will discern that we do not live in ordinary times, but that a new and powerful impulse has been given to the human mind, which, under judicious influences, may issue in great and permanent improvements of the social state.

In presenting this memorial, we solemnly declare, in the presence of God, that we have no private or narrow views. On this subject we belong to no sect, no party. As lovers of our country, as friends of mankind, as disciples of Jesus Christ, with the spirit of peace in our breasts, and with a deep impression of the miseries of war, we are only solicitous to prevent the effusion of human blood by human hands, and to recall men to the conviction that they are brethren. We trust that the warmth with which we have spoken, will not be construed into a want of deference towards our rulers. On such a subject, coldness would be a crime. Our convictions are deep, and no language but that of zeal and earnestness, would do them justice.

We hope that we are addressing rulers who are sensible to the responsibility imposed by the possession of power; who regard the influence which is granted them on human affairs, as a solemn trust; who consider themselves as belonging to their country and to mankind, and who

desire to treasure up for themselves consolations in that hour when human applause will be an unavailing sound, and when no recollection will be so dear as that

of having aided, with a disinterested zeal, the cause of peace and humanity. By order of said Society.

WILLIAM PHILLIPS, *President.*

Thaddeus Mason Harris, *Recor. Secr'y.*



MORTALITY AND HOPE.

'Tis man alone demands the muse's sigh,
O'er man her pity sheds its tenderest shower,
Of all the countless tribes that round him die
The only prophet of his final hour!

In each shrunk leaf he sees the flower display,
Each falling sun that sinks to ocean's bed,
He notes how swift his bloom shall fade away!
He marks how low his glory shall be laid!

Can this short span of being be his all?
Must minds, whose wishes shoot beyond the tomb,
Dash their bruised frames against confinement's wall,
And droop the prisoners of so scant a room?

Say, must I toil, year following year, to slay,
In all their coarser or their subtler forms,
The various follies on my peace that prey,
Only at length to fall a prey of worms?

When love of knowledge most intense shall glow,
When most I value, reason's precious light,
Then, must I cease, forever cease to know?
Then, reason's lamp go out in endless night?

While the brute tribes, with happier dulness blest,
No painful sense of straiten'd knowledge show;
In easy ign'rance all incurious rest,
Content their fellows and their food to know;

Was I informed with this more stirring mind
To mourn a night no dawn shall e'er remove?
Seeking a day I ne'er am doom'd to find,
With anxious, fruitless steps ordain'd to rove?

To spend my soul in life-consuming sighs
That men on men with savage rage should prey;
Nor hope to see a fairer scene arise,
Whose smiling image shall my pains repay?

The noblest want which nature knows to raise,
Say, shall she leave alone without its food ?
Leave, while each lower thirst her care allays,
Unslak'd the lofty wish of boundless good.

Cease, cease, my song, to mourn the lot of man !
Revoke the murmur, and recall the tear !
It *cannot be* that nature's faultless plan
To him alone denies a suited sphere.

The eagle pinions of this active mind,
Though now a little space enclose their flights,
At length the firmament, they ask, shall find,
And soar, without control, celestial heights.

FAWCETT.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

A REMARKABLE HINDOO REFORMER.

A singular character has lately risen up in Bengal, as a Hindoo Reformer, by the name of Rammohun Roy. He is a Brahmin, about thirty-two years of age, of great property and influence. He is shrewd, active, and prepossessing in his manners, and versed in various languages. He speaks and writes English correctly. His great business is to give lectures to his countrymen on the *Unity of God*. He says, that the religion of Mahomet first made some impression on his mind ; but on further acquaintance with it, he was convinced, that it could not be from God. He is acquainted with the Christian Scriptures, and is said to study them. He has nearly five hundred followers. He has published different tracts in English, in Persian, and in Bengalee, against the grosser Superstitions of the Hindoos, but obviously intended to recommend their more ancient creed.—This is the substance of the account given of his character in the Christian Observer, as copied from the Church Missionary Register. One of the Tracts published by this Refor-

mer is introduced with an address of which the following are extracts.

“ *To the Believers of the only true God :*

“ The greater part of the Brahmins, as of other sects of Hindoos, are quite incapable of justifying that idolatry which they continue to practice. When questioned on the subject, in place of adducing reasonable arguments in support of their conduct, they conceive it fully sufficient to quote their ancestors as positive authorities. And some of them are become very ill disposed towards me, because I have forsaken idolatry, for the worship of the true and eternal God.

“ In order therefore to vindicate my own faith and that of our early forefathers, I have been endeavouring for some time past to convince my countrymen of the true meaning of our sacred book ; and to prove that my aberration deserves not the opprobrium which some unreflecting persons have been so ready to throw upon me.

The whole body of the Hindoo theology, law, and literature, is contained in the *Veds*, which are affirmed to be

coeval with the creation. These works are extremely voluminous; and being written in the most elevated and metaphorical style, are, as may be well supposed, in many passages seemingly confused and contradictory. Upwards of two thousand years ago the great *Byas*, reflecting on the perpetual difficulty arising from these sources, composed, with great discrimination, a complete and compendious abstract of the whole; and also reconciled those texts which appeared to stand at variance. This work he termed the *Vedant*—which signifies *the Resolution of all the Veds*. It has continued to be most highly revered by all the Hindoos. But from its being concealed within the dark curtain of the Sungscrit language, and the Brahmins permitting themselves alone to interpret, or even to touch, any book of the kind, the *Vedant*, although perpetually quoted, is little known to the publick; and the practice of few Hindoos, indeed, bears the least accordance with its precepts.

“In pursuance of my vindication, I have to the best of my abilities, translated this hitherto unknown work, as well as an abridgment thereof, into the Hindostanee and Bengalee languages; and distributed them, free of cost, among my own countrymen, as widely as circumstances have possibly allowed. The present is an endeavour to render an abridgment of the same into English; by which I expect to prove to my European friends, that the superstitious practices which deform the Hindoo religion, have nothing to do with the pure spirit of its dictates.

“I have observed that both in their writings and conversation, many Europeans feel a wish to palliate and soften the features of Hindoo idolatry; and are inclined to inculcate that all objects of worship are considered by their votaries as emblematical representations of the Supreme Divinity. If this were indeed the case, I might, perhaps, be led into some examination of the subject; but the truth is, the Hindoos of the present day have no such views of the subject, but firmly believe in the real existence of innu-

merable gods and goddesses, who possess, in their own departments, full and independent power; and to propitiate them, and not the true God, are temples erected, and ceremonies performed. There can be no doubt however, and it is my whole design to prove, that every rite has its derivation from the allegorical adoration of the true Deity: but, at the present day, all this is forgotten; and, among many, it is even *heresy* to mention it.

“I hope it will not be presumed that I intend to establish the preference of my faith over that of other men. The result of controversy on such a subject, however multiplied, must be ever unsatisfactory: for the reasoning faculty, which leads men to certainty in things within its reach, produces no effect on questions beyond its comprehension. I do no more than assert, that, if correct reasoning, and the dictates of common sense, induce the belief of a wise, uncreated Being, who is the supporter and ruler of the boundless universe; we should also consider him the most powerful and Supreme existence, far surpassing our powers of comprehension or description; and although men of uncultivated minds and even some learned individuals, (but in this one point blinded by prejudice,) readily choose as the object of their adoration, any thing which they can always see, and which they pretend to feed, the absurdity of such conduct is not thereby in the least degree diminished.

“My constant reflections on the inconvenient, or rather injurious rites introduced by the peculiar practice of Hindoo idolatry, which, more than any other Pagan worship, destroys the texture of society, together with compassion for my countrymen, have compelled me to use every possible effort to awaken them from their dream of error; and, by making them acquainted with their scriptures, enable them to contemplate, with true devotion, the Unity and omnipresence of nature's God.

“By taking the path which conscience and sincerity direct, I, born a Brahmin, have exposed myself to the

complaining and reproaches, even of some of my relations, whose prejudices are strong, and whose temporal advantage depends upon the present system. But these, however accumulated, I can tranquilly bear; trusting that a day will arrive, when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice, perhaps acknowledged with gratitude. At any rate, whatever men may say, I cannot be deprived of this consolation, *my motives are acceptable to that Being who beholds in secret, and compensates openly.*"

This Address is of an uncommon character. If it be regarded as a specimen of the views, the objects, the talents, and the temper of this young Reformer, he certainly appears to good advantage. His being raised up at this time, while the Christian world is so alive with efforts to spread the gospel among all nations, is truly a remarkable occurrence. That his views of the Supreme Being accord with the Bible, and that they tend to the subversion of the present system of Hindoo superstition, will readily be perceived. But whether they will facilitate, or retard the introduction of Christianity among the Hindoos, is a question which time must answer. At first view, it would be natural to suppose, that the success of this reformer would prepare the way for the reception of the Bible. But if he is fully persuaded that the genuine Hindoo scriptures contain his sublime views of God, and that they are a revelation of the Divine will to the Hindoos; and should he succeed in converting his countrymen to this belief; the influence of his opinions may operate as a barrier to the prevalence

of the Christian religion in India.—There is, however, one consideration which may afford ground of hope, that such will *not* be the effect. When the fetters of a superstitious education are once broken, the minds of men are better prepared to examine impartially, the several theories which may solicit their attention.

Let it be observed, that in India, as well as other countries, he who dissents from long established articles of faith, and endeavours to correct the errors of his brethren, exposes himself to severe trials. His character, if not his life, will surely be assailed. It is reported that the Brahmins, who are the clergy in India, "have twice attempted the life," of their dissenting brother. They unquestionably are the men who are disposed to accuse him of "heresy" for departing from their polytheistical creed. He has to encounter the formidable objection, that all the great and good Brahmins for many ages have been of the opinion from which he now dissents; and he is probably loaded with reproach and censure as an arrogant and graceless man, who is misleading his followers, and attempting to undermine the very *essentials of religion*. However amiable he may be in his disposition, however impartial and conscientious in his inquiries, and however upright and exemplary in his morals; his motives will probably be impeached, and his character traduced by his orthodox brethren. For they will very easily prove, to their own satisfaction, that *all good men have been orthodox in their opinions, and that polytheism is orthodoxy.*



THE BENEFIT OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

[Continued from page 95.]

MR. COOPER farther observed—"I would beg leave to relate one instance of a very striking benefit which came under my observation at the school where I was visitor. A poor woman

applied on a Sunday morning for a Bible for her girl.

I made some inquiries respecting her daughter, and learnt, that she had five girls successively in the same school.

I asked her, whether *she* thought her children were any better for the instruction they had received. She replied with great earnestness, "The better, Sir! I never can be thankful enough to God and the gentlemen of this school, that my children were brought here, and for the instruction they have received." I inquired in what respect? And she told me, "that before the eldest girls were admitted to the school, neither she nor her husband attended a place of worship. And they lived by no means comfortably together. But after the two eldest had been to the Sunday School some time, they said to her one Sunday, 'Mother, you never go to church or chapel: why do you not go?' She was very much struck with this, and began to think of the circumstances of her being taught in this manner by her child; and began herself to attend a place of worship; and some time after her husband also. She added, that they considered their children the greatest blessing; that her girls had all gone out to service, and had behaved well, and obtained a good character." And she further added, as one motive of her thankfulness, that when she looked into other poor families, and observed what trouble they had with their children, and when she heard their cursing and swearing in the streets, never hearing a bad word from any of hers, she thought she could not say enough as to the benefits her children and family had derived from the school.

First Report, p. 154.

III. Testimony of John Daughtny, who had been in the habit of visiting the poor constantly for four years.

Page 158.

What is your opinion as to the characters of street beggars? "That they are idle and worthless."

In answer to the question, "What are the best means of curing and preventing the evil of begging in the streets?" He said, "The most effectual preventive would be to enlighten the publick mind upon the point, and to check the injudicious benevolence, which supports and encourages such vagrants, [giving them money in the

streets.] It is difficult, perhaps, continues he, to state facts, which prove the direct influence, which *Sunday and other Schools* have upon this evil. But the proper observance of the *Sabbath*, by the lower orders of Society has a most important influence on the moral character and general comfort of their families; and it will rarely be found to happen that poor persons so brought up, and who have also the advantage of suitable instruction, become mendicants. Sunday or charity schools, perhaps, above every other means promote among the poor this much neglected duty. The children are not only taught the sacred obligation of the *Sabbath*, but are habituated to observe it, by being regularly conducted to publick worship. Such is the effect on the poor in general of a stated attendance on the publick service of religion, that those, who are accustomed to visit them, are in most cases able to discern it in the very aspect of the family. Where the *Sabbath* is observed, you may expect to find, in even the poorest, cleanliness, decency, and civil behaviour; but where it is violated, the reverse of these are often to be met with. In the course of inspecting the condition of several hundred families for the purpose of affording some relief to the necessitous and deserving, the most filthy and wretched of the whole was one in which the father was found working at his trade on the *Sabbath*; his children having never, to their recollection been in a place of worship, and none of them taught so much as the alphabet.

Numerous as are the instances of depravity in London, more than fifteen out of twenty, will be found to have had no such instruction in early life, as is at present afforded by Sunday Schools. Persons, who have been for many years connected with these institutions, and have anxiously traced the destination of many of the children, that were formerly under their care, can point out great numbers, who, being grown into life, are now good members of society; but they have never discovered an instance of one becoming a mendicant, or a street-beggar. Well

regulated charity schools, are directly calculated to counteract the disposition and habits, that might lead to mendicancy. In the course even of a few months, after the lowest order of children have been admitted, their very appearance is observed to undergo a decided improvement; they are uniformly cleaner, and more tidily dressed; and their minds are evidently raised a degree further from the meanness and degradation of mendicants. But they do not, therefore, become assuming or impertinent, on the contrary, the order and subjection, to which they are trained, and the instruction they receive in their moral and religious duties, excite a more respectful behaviour, and more correct feelings towards their superiors in general. The knowledge and moral influence, of which the children thus partake, they communicate in a greater or less degree to all their various families. Not unfrequently, the benefit, which in this way extends to the parents, is confirmed by a word of counsel and admonition from a teacher, who calls perhaps to inquire after an absent child, or to afford relief in case of sickness. Through such means, multitudes of the poor, who were before notoriously vicious and profligate and were among the most likely to become mendicants, are now not less remarkable for the virtues, by which families and societies at large are so much

benefited. These remarks apply in a great measure to these day-schools, in which the children are assembled on the Sundays, for moral and religious instruction, and are statedly conducted to publick worship. If required, proof could be afforded of every part of the statement. In a school, established at Hoxton, a few years ago, where there was a great number of very depraved poor, the moral improvement in the neighbourhood is visible to all the inhabitants; and there are many instances, which can be pointed out, of the most complete reformation, in the morals and conduct of the parents from the circumstance having been introduced into the schools. In some instances, they have taught their parents to read; and particularly in a village, which was proverbial for depravity, where there were a number of brick-makers, who might be considered a most wretched set of beings: the face of that neighbourhood is completely changed in the course of the last year or two; and the poor have expressed such surprise at the interest taken in their welfare, and in the welfare of their children, that it has had the best possible effect. This I know, concludes this very judicious and benevolent witness, can be confirmed by positive proof of the good resulting from such institutions.

Report, p. 156. 160.

INTERESTING FACTS.

On the 25th of September, twelve hundred dwelling houses, stores and buildings were destroyed by fire at Port Louis, in the Isle of France.

The King of Hayti has avowed a design of gradually causing to disappear from among his subjects French manners and customs and even their language.

On the 3d of March a fire broke out in Philadelphia in the house of Mr. James Devitt, and *five of his children* fell a prey to the flames.

The number of the poor supplied from one soup house in New York averages 5000 daily! An institution of this kind is established in Portland.

"Berne Jan. 10. The governments of Lucerne and Glaris, have declared their accession to the Holy Alliance."

It has been stated in the Newspapers that a new species of *fire* has been discovered in England, resulting from the compression of oxygen and hydrogen gas—which melts instantly the hardest metals even platina.—Also, that Sir H.

Davy has found, by different experiments, that by mixing 20 or 30 grains of common magnesia with each pound of the worst flour, it will make good bread

The sentence of death was executed on Henry Phillips at Boston, March 13th.

Cayuga Peace Society.—On the 4th of Feb. 1817, a Society was formed at Scipio in the state of New York, called the Cayuga Peace Society. Elder David Rathbone was Moderator of the meeting, and Lewis B. Parsons Secretary. The Constitution of the Society was published in the Auburn Gazette of Feb. 12.

ORDINATIONS.

At Woolwick, Rev. Jonathan Adams. Introductory prayer by Rev. J. W. Ellingwood, Bath; Sermon by Rev. W. Jenks, Bath; ordaining prayer by Rev. E. Gillet, Hallowell; Charge to the Pastor, by Rev. J. Winship, Woolwich; Charge to the Society by Rev. K. Bailey, New Castle; Right-hand by Rev. H. Packard, Wiscasset; Concluding prayer, by Rev. D. M. Mitchell, Wadoboro'.

In Sudbury, Feb. 26, Rev. R. Hurlbut. The several parts were performed in the usual order by Rev. Dr. Kirkland—Rev. Mr. Bates—Rev. Dr. Ripley—Rev. Mr. Kellogg—Rev. Mr. Wright, and Rev. Mr. Packard.

In Chester, N. H. Rev. Clement Parker.

At Charlestown, Rev. Thomas Prentiss. Introductory Prayer by Rev. C. Lowell; Sermon by Rev. President Kirkland; ordaining prayer by Rev. Dr. Harris; Charge by Rev. Dr. Ware; Right-hand by Rev. Henry Ware; Concluding prayer, by Rev. Mr. Allen, Northborough.

OBITUARY.

Died in England, Rt. Hon. Charles Earl Stanhope.

In Pennsylvania, Samuel Meridith, Esq. formerly Treasurer of the United States, aged 76.

In Maryland, Rev. Clarke Brown.

In Rowe, of hydrophobia, Horace Burr, aged 18.

In Worcester, Hon. Francis Blake, aged 43.

In Hanover, N. H. Major Adolphus Wheelock, aged 77.

In Plainfield, N. H. Hon. Daniel Kimball, aged 63.

In Salem Mr. John Appleton aged 78—and Mr. Wm. Peele, aged 79.

In Newbury Mr. Michael Sawyer, aged 78.

In Danvers, widow Abigail Porter, aged 84.

In Newburyport, Gen. J. Titcomb, aged 88.

In Brighton, Mr. Sam'l Townsend, aged 71.

In France Gen. Turreau, late Minister to the United States.

In Brussels, Lt. Gen. Count Alexander Tilley.

In Virginia, Mr. John Anthony, aged 104.

In New Lebanon, Catharine Phelps, a pauper, aged 104.

In St. Ann's, Jamaica, Jan. 21, a female slave, aged 130.

In Falmouth, Jamaica, Lucretia Stewart, a free black woman, aged 130.

In Boston, Mr. John Gore, Esq. aged 46.

At Middleborough, Col. Edward Sparrow, aged 71.

In New York, during the week ending on the 25th of March, 27 persons.

In Providence, Mr. John Salisbury, aged 92.

In Plymouth, Mr. John Otis, aged 74.

In Dedham, Dr. Phillip Draper, aged 60.

In Gloucester, Mrs. Hannah Brown, aged 94.

In Newbury, Mr. Benjamin Poor, aged 94.

In Westford, Charles Proctor, Esq. M. D. aged 62.